

MINUTES OF THE
NEBRASKA NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
DECEMBER 12, 1996

Those in attendance were:

Robert Bell, Chair	Roy Stewart, Member
Don Larson, Member	Glen Kroese, Member
Joe Hergott, Member	Steve Chick
Richard Jiskra, Member	Jerry Mathiasen
Dale Watermeier, Member	Ron Fleecs
Vince Kramper, Member	Tom Mountford
Frank Bartak, Member	Kathy Vasa
Donald Roberts, Member	Steve Oltmans
Mike Shaughnessy, Member	Dayle Williamson, Director
Robert Gifford, Member	Jim Cook, Staff
Wayne Davis, Member	Tom Pesek, Staff

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. in Lower Level meeting room E in the Nebraska State Office building in Lincoln, Nebraska, by Commission Chair Robert Bell. Mr. Bell commended Bob Gifford on his service with the Commission and Mr. Gifford commented briefly.

NOTICE OF THE MEETING

Notice of the meeting was placed in the LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR on December 4, 1996, notifying the public of the meeting.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIAL

The following items of informational material were distributed during the course of the meeting and a copy of each is attached to the file copy of the minutes.

1. Letter from Governor Nelson to President Clinton on CCC Funds for Technical Assistance.
2. Letter from Bob Bell to Commission appointing members to LB 1085 Study Committee.
3. NRCS report to NRC and NARD.
4. Letter from Mike Mosel to Bob Bell appointing members to LB 1085 Study Committee.
5. Minutes of the Program Committee Meeting.
6. NRDF Financial Status Report, December 9, 1996
7. NRDF Quarterly Report, October 31, 1996.
8. Skull Creek Watershed Program Report.
9. Status of Small Watersheds Flood Control Fund, Dec. 9, 1996.
10. Soil and Water Conservation Fund Report.

11. Letter from Dana Snyder of NRCS listing flood damage reduction benefits in P.L. 566 watershed projects.

MINUTES

Motion was made by Kramper and seconded by Gifford to approve the minutes of the October 31, 1996 Commission meeting as distributed. Motion carried.

Aye: Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, Gifford, Davis, Bartak, Kramper, Shaughnessy, Larson, Roberts, Bell

Nay: None

Abstain: Kroese, Stewart

Not Present: Nelson, Mercer, Welsh

EXPENDITURES

Motion was made by Davis and seconded by Jiskra to approve the expenditure report for October and November, 1996 as distributed. Motion carried.

Aye: Jiskra, Watermeier, Gifford, Davis, Bartak, Kramper, Shaughnessy, Kroese, Stewart, Larson, Roberts, Hergott, Bell

Nay: None

Not Present: Nelson, Mercer, Welsh

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dayle Williamson distributed copies of a letter from Governor Nelson to President Clinton urging Commodity Credit Corporation funds be used to provide technical assistance for Farm Bill conservation programs in FY 1997.

Williamson briefly commented on the Commission's partnership with NRCS and other agencies. He noted that Gayle Starr was attending a meeting in Denver with the Colorado Association of Soil Conservation Districts today and tomorrow.

Williamson reported briefly on the LB 1085 study and Chair Bell distributed a memo from him to the Commission members stating that he had appointed Vince Kramper, Wayne Davis, Don Roberts, and Gayle Starr to the seven member committee that was established at the Special Commission meeting on December 11th. Chair Bell asked State Conservationist Steve Chick to serve as an advisor to the LB 1085 Study Committee, and Mr. Chick indicated he would be pleased to assist.

ADVISOR'S COMMENTS

Steve Chick distributed his written report and noted that the

Five Rivers RC&D in southeast Nebraska was recently approved by USDA. He commented briefly on the Wetland Reserve Program and the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program and noted that FSA has proposed closing its field offices in Spencer, Chappell, and Harrisburg. He also noted the reduction in funding for NRCS technical assistance for land treatment measures.

Jerry Mathiasen distributed a letter from Mike Mosel, President of NARD, appointing Mosel, Dick Beran, and John Turnbull to the seven member LB 1085 committee. Six alternates, Roger Duitsman, Clint Johannes, Lloyd Nellor, Glenn Johnson, Ron Wunibald and Jerry Mathiasen, were also listed in the letter. He noted that the NRDs received an award from the Nebraska Land Improvement Contractors Association and that the NARD Legislative Conference is scheduled for January 28-29, 1997. He also reported that a NACD conference will be held February 2-6, 1997, in Kansas City, Missouri, and the NARD annual trip to Washington, D.C. is scheduled for April 13-17, 1997. NARD was randomly selected for an IRS audit and it is currently underway.

ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

Vince Kramper reported that he has been appointed to the selection committee which will meet on December 18th. The amount of Environmental Trust funds will double to approximately \$10,000,000/year during 1997 as the landfill program is phased out of the allocation formula. However, funds at this level will not be available until 1998.

LEGISLATIVE & BUDGET COMMITTEE

Committee Chair, Robert Gifford, called on Jim Cook who briefly reported on the Ponderosa Hog Farm groundwater case in the North Platte NRD. He noted that the Natural Resources Committee will hold a hearing on the Niobrara Scenic River on December 14 and that the Little Blue NRD has requested that it be allowed to publish a summary of its groundwater management area rules and regs rather than the full text. Legislation will be introduced to this effect in the coming session. He also noted that the Fish and Wildlife Service found the Kingsley Dam FERC relicensing plan (the Nebraska Plan) likely to jeopardize threatened and endangered species along the Platte River and offered two Reasonable and Prudent Alternatives (RPA's). Dayle Williamson commented that Senator Vrtiska is considering possible legislation regarding the reclamation of mined lands in the state.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Committee Chair, Vince Kramper, reported that Tom Pesek had reviewed the Resources Development Fund Financial Status report and the Quarterly Report with committee members. Kramper noted that Milt Moravek had reported on the status of the Lower Wood River/Upper Warm Slough Flood Control Project and reviewed the Central Platte NRD's request for an obligation of \$50,000 to the project. Motion was made by Kramper and seconded by Davis that the Commission obligate \$50,000 to the Lower Wood River/Upper Warm Slough Flood Control Project effective immediately. Motion carried.

Aye: Watermeier, Gifford, Davis, Bartak, Kramper, Shaughnessy, Kroese, Stewart, Larson, Roberts, Hergott, Jiskra, and Bell
Nay: None
Not Present: Nelson, Mercer, Welsh

Tom Mountford and Kathy Vasa of the Lower Platte North NRD presented the annual report on the status of the Skull Creek Watershed Project. They noted that the NRD has primarily focused on the watershed of Site 55 thus far. Approximately 630 acres of additional land treatment will bring the 2,650 acre watershed up to the 75% adequate land treatment goal. It appears there may be some landowner resistance to land treatment work in the Site 30 and 31 watersheds.

Kramper noted Pesek had distributed the Small Watersheds Flood Control Fund status report and had briefly reviewed the staff appraisals for the two tracts at South Branch Little Nemaha Site 27 and Wolf-Wildcat Site 51 that will be auctioned on January 8, 1997.

Kramper called on Ron Fleecs who described the land rights associated with Site 9 of the Swan Creek Watershed and reviewed his NRD's request for funding assistance on six tracts. Motion was made by Kramper and seconded by Bartak that the Commission approve the appraisals on (1) the Lydia Homolka property and commit 100% of \$100,146 (154.4 acres) for fee title or 50% of \$18,725 (85.1 acres) for easement; (2) the Randall Meyer property (68.2 acres) and commit 50% of \$13,000 for easement; (3) the Alfred Brejcha, Jr. property (23.2 acres) and commit 50% of \$9,800 for easement; (4) the Jerry Homolka property (23.7 acres) and commit 50% of \$1,050 for easement; (5) the Edmund Brejcha, Jr. property (10.8 acres) and commit 50% of \$575 for easement; and (6) the Alfred Brejcha, Jr. property (22.7 acres) and commit 50% of \$7,100 for easement. Motion carried.

Aye: Gifford, Davis, Bartak, Kramper, Shaughnessy, Kroese, Stewart, Larson, Roberts, Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, Bell
Nay: None
Not Present: Nelson, Mercer, Welsh

Kramper reported that the Soil & Water Conservation Fund status report had been distributed and that Jim Cook had reviewed the Natural Resources Enhancement Fund (NREF) and said the Commission needs to consider at its January 1997 meeting whether up to 10% of the funds (approximately \$200,000/year) will be reserved

for innovative projects that protect water quality.

Pesek distributed a letter from Dana Snyder of NRCS which listed flood damage reduction figures in selected P.L. 566 watershed projects in recent years. Brief discussion followed.

COMMISSION MEMBER SELECTION CAUCUSES

The caucus schedule to elect Commission members from the Elkhorn, Little Blue, Middle Platte, Niobrara-White Hat, North Platte, and Republican river basins was reviewed. Motion was made by Davis and seconded by Stewart to approve the schedule as presented. Motion carried.

Aye: Davis, Bartak, Kramper, Shaughnessy, Kroese, Stewart, Larson, Roberts, Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, Gifford, Bell

Nay: None

Not Present: Nelson, Mercer, Welsh

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Commission will be January 29 & 30, 1997, in Lincoln. Kramper noted that he will meet with the Governor's staff regarding the Commission's budget on December 12, 1996.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:10 a.m.

Chairman
Resources

Director of Natural

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING December 11, 1996

Those in attendance were:

Robert Bell, Chair
Dale Watermeier, Member

Steve Chick
Jerry Mathiasen

Joe Hergott, Member
Richard Jiskra, Member
Wilbur Nelson, Member
Vince Kramper, Member
Robert Gifford, Member
Frank Bartak, Member
Wayne Davis, Member
Don Larson, Member
Glen Kroese, Member
Don Roberts, Member
Roy Stewart, Member

Stan Staab
Dennis Schueth
John Thorburn
Russ Edeal
Steve Oltmans
Howard Ottoson
Sara Kay
Dayle Williamson, Director
Jim Cook, Staff
Gayle Starr, Staff

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order in the lower level conference room E of the Nebraska State Office Building in Lincoln, Nebraska at approximately 1:30 p.m. by Chair Robert Bell.

NOTICE OF THE MEETING

Notice of the meeting was placed in the LINCOLN JOURNAL & STAR on December 4, 1996, notifying the public of the meeting.

LB 1085 STUDY

Chair Robert Bell explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the first study required of the Commission as a result of LB 1085. He added that the topics to be included in the study were: NRD board size, revenue base, boundary changes, and district consolidations. He then turned the meeting over to Gayle Starr.

Starr explained some of the background of the study and noted that at the last meeting Commission members were asked to visit with NRD directors and staff to see what ideas they might have for Commission consideration. He then solicited ideas from the Commission members and others present. The various ideas offered were listed and briefly discussed by Commission members.

Motion was made by Kramper and seconded by Watermeier to have the director send the list of ideas to NRDs for their comments with a clear explanation that these are only ideas, none of which have been endorsed by the Commission or any member of the Commission and that a seven member Committee composed of three Commission members, three representatives of NARD, and one staff representative be selected to be responsible for further work on the study. Motion carried.

Aye: Hergott, Watermeier, Gifford, Bartak, Kramper, Kroese, Stewart, Larson, Bell

Nay: Jiskra, Davis, Roberts, Nelson

Not Present: Mercer, Welsh, Shaughnessy

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:15 p.m.

Chairman

Director of Natural Resources